



Developing Sustainable Communities
How is York doing?



Case Study 3: Hungate

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Introduction to the Case Studies

York Civic Trust is committed to fostering the development of sustainable communities or neighbourhoods in order to house the city's population growth. In short, a sustainable community is "a place where people want to live and work, now and in the future"¹. It is a community where economic, environmental and social issues are interrelated and addressed together.

This is the third in a planned series of case studies, which attempt to assess to what extent selected major developments in York meet the definition of a sustainable community, and the extent to which they have adopted a sustainable approach to transport.

The aim of the case studies is to review progress, compare plans against achievements and learn lessons for the future. We do not have the resources to undertake full-blown evaluations, and so these case studies are largely impressionistic. We have looked at the objectives that each development set out to achieve, the comments that were made on the original plans and as work has progressed, and we have observed the results in the field.

This case study looks at Hungate, a development that whilst remaining incomplete is, in part, now approaching maturity. Unlike the other case studies it involves a city centre site, with mixed uses and a relatively high residential density, almost exclusively consisting of apartments. It is also a more complex development comprising a number of elements constructed over an extended time frame, which makes it a challenge to research and describe.

We have to recognise that there are often different perspectives on how successful a development is. Residents and their representatives may take one perspective, while the experts and academics may take another. We have tried to represent these differences where they are apparent.

Acknowledgements

York Civic Trust would like to thank the following active and involved residents for their valuable contributions:

- Michael Alexander
- Phil Ogden (thanks also for the photographs)

¹ The Egan Review, 2004.

- John Chick
- Nicola Lowe



Postcard dated 1937 "Wreckers" during the demolition of Hungate.

Overview of the Development

The Hungate site extends to around 4.1 hectares, lying between the River Foss on the south and east sides, and Stonebow to the north.

Dr Jayne Rimmer, York Archaeological Trust, describes how "Land redevelopment and urban renewal are re-occurring themes in the long-term history of the Hungate neighbourhood as its physical landscape, community, and identity have undergone considerable change in response to wider social and economic processes such as urbanisation and industrialisation."

Rapid urbanisation and immigration transformed the Hungate area in the nineteenth century into a high-density residential neighbourhood. Seebohm Rowntree, in his 1901 study *Poverty: A study of town life*, called it a 'slum'. Living conditions were such that water-borne diseases were rife. In addition to the densely packed terraces of housing, there were saw-mills, flour mills and workshops. From the mid nineteenth century, the eastern end of the site was occupied by a large gasworks. To the north-west lay part of the County Hospital.

Widespread clearance took place in the 1930s, and the vacant sites were occupied by warehouses, garages, depots and electricity and engineering works, a laundry, as well as car parks.

By the 1990s it was the largest remaining development opportunity within the city's walls and outside the Central Conservation Area (though adjoining it). Archaeology and flooding issues constrained the site's development. By the early 2000s much of the area was becoming derelict and it was cleared.

The plan below shows the boundaries of the Hungate development site:



The aerial photograph below shows the site after partial clearance in 2007 (copyright of Geomapping plc).



Two further air photographs may be of interest (Courtesy of Historic England). Click on the links below, and you can enlarge the views by clicking on the photographs. Return to the report by closing the Historic England page:

The first shows the area as it looked in September 1942. Much of the area had been demolished or was in a bad state.

https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/record/raf_150_uk694_v_0042

The second shows the area as it looked in March 2010. Phase 1 (Blocks A, B and C) of the new Hungate is complete.

https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/record/20998_028

Timeline

1999	Original Planning Brief published
2002	Outline Planning Application submitted and consultation process
2002	Community Consultation Group established
2004	Design guide and codes published
2005	Revised Development Brief approved
2005	Outline Planning Permission granted

2006	REMM ² for Phase 1 submitted
2007	REMM for Phase 2 submitted
2008	Plans for new council offices (3-7 storey HQ) were submitted (later abandoned)
2008	Progress stalled by the Financial Crisis
2009	Phase 1 (Blocks A, B, C) completed and occupied
2014	Block E (Leetham House) Planning Permission granted
2014	Scoping opinion on residential-led development
2015	Hiscox Insurance HQ opened
2015	Outline application for Blocks G and H approved
2015	REMM for Phase 3 submitted (Block F)
2017	REMM for Phase 4 submitted (Block D)
2018	Full application for Phase 5 submitted (Block G)
2021	Full application for Phase 6 submitted (Block H)
2024	Estimated completion
Unknown	Actual completion

The Vision

Hungate was envisaged as a new urban neighbourhood – a mixed development of high-quality offices, retail and residential land uses, offset by city squares and green spaces, and including a new bridge over the Foss. The Council’s Development Brief described the vision thus:

“To create an exciting and attractive new riverside office, leisure and residential quarter of the highest quality which adds to the vitality and viability of the city centre, is safe and secure, and which promotes sustainable development by providing a mix of uses, with priority given to pedestrians, people with mobility problems, cyclists and public transport.”

“The redevelopment of Hungate will create a thriving and sustainable community in the heart of York City Centre which embraces the site’s past, enriches its present and delivers a valuable and lasting legacy for York’s future.” (City of York Council)

We have a “A vision to create a sustainable and attractive new riverside neighbourhood, designed to reflect the unique character of York.” (City of York Council Development Brief).

² REMM = Aspects of an Outline Planning Permission that are reserved for later consideration.

“When fully complete, the Hungate development will provide nearly 1,000 new city centre apartments together with commercial and community space, as well as high quality public spaces and landscaping.” (City of York Council Development Brief).

The proposed development will result in a “New City Quarter: Interpreting ‘Yorkness’ for the 21st Century.” (Lend Lease)

“This is an exciting mixed-use regeneration scheme that will breathe new life into a run-down area of York and see the creation of an urban neighbourhood that will provide new homes, new work spaces, community facilities and public open spaces within the city walls, while also being a major focus of archaeological investigation and discovery.” (Spokesperson for the Joint Venture Partnership).

The Development Team

- Proposals for the redevelopment of Hungate were put forward by Hungate (York) Regeneration Ltd. This was a Joint Venture Partnership of Land Securities Group PLC (Lendlease), Crosby Homes (Yorkshire) Ltd. and Evans Property Group. Crosby Homes was taken over by Lendlease in 2005.
- Weedon Architects – progressed the proposals from planning through design development for the developer, ready for tender. They were then attached to the successful contractor to see the schemes through to completion.
- Lichfields provided planning and development consultancy, and submitted the proposals to City of York Council.
- John Thompson & Partners (jtp) provided community consultation and master planning.
- CityLets York – provided specialist advice as letting agents, advising landlords on potential rental income and marketing properties to tenants looking for city centre apartments.

Development Brief

An early Draft Development Brief was produced by City of York Council’s Directorate of Development Services in September 1995. A revamped Development Brief was produced by City of York Council and approved in October 1999. Following extensive consultation and adaptation the Development Brief was finally approved in 2005. Finalising the Brief therefore took a long time.

The approved Development Brief sought a mix of uses. It identified Hungate as a potential location for a major ‘landmark’ office development, small scale retail

development and residential development with a capacity of around 600 dwellings. It sought respect for local character, whilst being imaginative and energy-efficient. The development was to be certified by an external environmental assessment, reflecting contemporary best practice. It was to be designed with the needs of disabled residents and visitors in mind. Open spaces were considered integral to good design and intended to appeal to all ages. The River Foss and King's Pool were seen as having great potential landscape and ecological value. There was to be play space for children and highly visible public works of art.

The Brief emphasised the need for a vibrant mix of house types, with integrated provision of affordable homes. The recommended proportion of affordable dwellings was 40%, with 70% of these for rent and 30% for sale. These properties were to be transferred to a social landlord.

It was envisaged that the new community would require improvement to local schools, the development of shops, a community focal building and an IT Media Centre. Further recommendations were made regarding flood alleviation and drainage, local ecology and archaeology. Many of the above requirements were the subject of a Section 106 agreement.

Master Planning

The City of York's planning brief set out a vision to create a sustainable and attractive new riverside quarter. The Master Plan would create³:

- A new urban quarter developed through a comprehensive Collaborative Placemaking process that reflects the unique character of York.
- A series of new streets, squares and public realm designed to sensitively knit into the surrounding fabric.
- Creation of 720 apartments and houses and 19,800 sq m of employment, retail, leisure and community uses.
- New natural habitats for wildlife along the banks of the River Foss.
- Sustainable transport initiatives to promote walking and cycling.
- A new pedestrian bridge to create links from the surrounding neighbourhoods through Hungate to the city centre."
- Development of a Design Code to inform the design of different phases of the masterplan.

³ Quoted from jtp's website.

- Engagement with English Heritage, CABE and City of York planners to gain Design Code consensus.
- A Community Forum provided an opportunity for on-going dialogue between key stakeholders as the scheme evolved.
- Formation of a Community Development Trust to manage the community facilities.

Public consultations on the master plan took place during 2003 and 2004, including an exhibition, meetings and newsletters. The results were summarised in a Statement of Community Involvement, produced by Rapleys Town Planning Consultants in January 2005.



The Master Plan above shows the Hungate development as currently completed or planned. (Lend Lease).

Preliminary analysis was carried out in 2002 and 2003, including a Built Heritage Assessment, a Sustainability Statement and an Ecological Appraisal. In 2003 the site was visited by the English Heritage Urban Panel, and further comments were made by the York Environment Forum.



Extract from planning application for block D showing the current and planned disposition of blocks.

A Design Guide ⁴, published in January 2004, laid down design criteria and codes. It established the footprints of the new buildings and their heights. In November 2004 John Thompson and Partners produced a Design Statement.

An Outline Planning Application was submitted by a Joint Development Partnership in December 2002. This was subsequently revised and approved in 2005.

"The scheme, for clients Lendlease and joint venture partner Evans Property Group, will provide 662 homes; 20,000 square metres of employment, retail, leisure and community uses; two new public squares and a series of new streets and public realm, designed to sensitively knit into the surrounding."

"Hungate is a unique place to live, combining a calm and relaxed environment with a vibrant city centre location. Everything about it has been designed to offer residents a healthy and happy way of life and it perfectly reflects York's character." (Lendlease/Evans sales brochure).

Because some of the key documents are no longer displayed on the City of York Council's planning portal, it is hard to be precise about the numbers and types of

⁴ *Design Code Principles – Final Draft.*

dwellings actually approved or completed. Further, the phasing has changed over time, and some documents refer to ‘phases’ and others to ‘blocks’. This is a complicated story to unravel and there may necessarily be some inaccuracies.



The drawing above shows the layout for Hungate as originally agreed. Note the different shapes and dispositions of the blocks, the large public square and the presence of a ‘focal building’. (Taken from the Planning Application).

The originally planned mix of dwellings was:

1 bed apartments	171	23.8%
2 bed apartments	466	64.7%
3 bed apartments	48	6.7%
4 bed apartments	35	4.9%
Total	720	100.1%

In summary, the entire development was to comprise apartments, with 88.5% of them comprising one or two bedrooms.

The planned number of dwellings ranges from 600 to 1,000, depending on which document you read. Also, later schemes included town houses as well as apartments.

Sustainability

Developers were required to produce a sustainability statement based on the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Sustainable Design and Construction, then being produced by City of York Council. Homes were to accord with the Building for Life Standard. Thirteen aspects of sustainable development were set out as a minimum that developers should address in their proposals.

Developers were required to support the provision of sustainable transport, a less car-oriented approach, and to contribute to a transport strategy for the area. The Development Brief envisaged a network of segregated cycle and pedestrian routes providing safe and attractive routes to local services. Bus facilities at Stonebow would be readily accessible, but needed upgrading. The Brief set maximum parking standards and minimum cycle park provision, together with car club, car sharing and community minibuss provision. The development was to avoid large areas of surface parking and encourage use of existing car parks in the surrounding area where possible. A Transport Assessment and Travel Plan were requirements of the development.

The Revised Masterplan was subject to an Environmental Statement. Building is controlled by a series of parameter plans which form part of the outline permission, and are referred to in the planning conditions, as well as a planning condition controlling the type and quantum of development. The hybrid planning permission is also bound by Section 106 legal obligations.

A sustainable approach to transport was also a requirement of the Development Brief. Car parking was to be provided in the basements beneath Blocks A, B and C, and in a multi-storey car park forming part of Block F.

Car parking spaces were as follows:

Block A B C	200
Block D	43
Block E	45
Block H	120
Off street	12

Multi-storey	60
Office	50
Total planned spaces	530

The apartments were to be provided with 665 bicycle storage spaces, and the offices with a further 50.

“Sustainability is at the forefront of design, from the cycle paths that encourage sustainable modes of transport to the cutting-edge interior features that help conserve energy. Each home comes with LED lighting and energy efficient appliances, which lower environmental impact and reduce household bills. The apartments also benefit from environment-friendly FSC® Forest Stewardship Council timber and contemporary finishes’. (Lendlease/Evans sales brochure).

Implementation of the plan

The Hungate site has a long and rather complicated planning history. Outline planning permission was originally granted for eight blocks (A to H) in 2006, and this was renewed in 2012. Blocks A, B and C were developed under the original planning permission. Block E was developed under a separate detailed planning application granted in 2014.

An Outline Planning application for Blocks D, F, G and H was approved in August 2015. This application included two new public spaces to be called St. John’s Square and Friar’s Quay, together with a riverside walk. A new hybrid⁵ planning permission was granted for Blocks D, F, G and H in 2017, followed by two further applications to secure amendments to Blocks F and G. A stand-alone planning permission for Block D was then granted in 2019.

Further details of the main planning applications are given in the Annex.

In summary, Hungate has been/is being developed in six phases:

Block A, Block B and Block C on the original plan, were designed as one entity. They comprise 164 apartments and town houses, together with a new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Foss, car parking, open space and landscaping. Work started in 2007 and was completed by Summer 2009. The bridge finally opened in 2012.

⁵ ‘Hybrid’ permission combines elements of outline and full permission.

There are basically two large blocks of apartments and town houses built around gated private courtyards. Cordwainers Court is to the north and Adventurers Court is towards the south. These two blocks are bounded on their eastern and southern edges by King's Pool Walk and Foss View, respectively. The two blocks are separated by a public thoroughfare called Pond Garth. The northern boundary is called Black Horse Lane.

The apartments and town houses can be quite difficult to distinguish on the ground. In total there may be 33 town houses (12 on King's Pool Walk, 6 on Foss View, 9 on Palmer Street and 6 on Pond Garth). There are, therefore, probably 131 apartments.

This phase of development included the regeneration of the historic King's Pool and its designation as a nature reserve, though it is unclear exactly what the 'regeneration' has involved. It also included secure underground car parking for residents, entered off Black Horse Lane.

Block D has full planning permission, granted in 2017. It was planned to provide 186 apartments in a 5–7 storey block. Construction on Block D was anticipated to start in Summer 2020, and be completed by Summer 2022. At the time of writing (April 2024), work has not commenced, though preliminary works have ensured the continuing validity of the planning permission.

In the meantime, a revised scheme (18/02946/FULM dated December 2018) has been submitted, involving the following changes:

- Omission of the basement car park – based on the argument that existing provision in Blocks A, B, C, and F has not been fully taken up.
- An increase in the number of dwelling units to 196 (99 one-bed; 90 two-bed and 7 three-bed apartments).
- Change in the extent of the 7-storey element on the St John Square elevation.
- Relocation of plant to ground floor level.
- Revised entrance.
- Revised apartment layouts – the three-bed units are reduced in size, though all units meet the Lifetime Homes standard.

Cycle parking (163 spaces) is to be provided within the courtyard at ground level.

Block E, is now known as Leetham House. Full planning permission was granted in September 2013 for 154 residential units in a building partly of 5 storeys and partly of 6-storeys. The scheme included seven small commercial units at ground level

(totalling 1,151 square metres), underground parking, access and landscaping. Work commenced on site in early 2016, and was completed in Spring 2017.

Interestingly, there were revised proposals in 2010, which would have increased the number of dwelling units to 175 (including some affordable units) and reduced the amount of commercial space. These seem to have been approved but not progressed.

The planning application shows that dwellings are a mix of studios, one, two and three bed apartments. They should have achieved an Eco-Homes rating of Very Good, with an Excellent rating being achieved on 15% of the dwellings. Other environmental initiatives include extensive cycle parking, solar water heating, car club initiatives, recycling facilities, green energy packs, micro-generation and locally sourced building materials. Other features are said to include shared amenity spaces, roof gardens, solar panels and green roofs. The homes were to be built to Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Block F, now known as Bellerby Court. This comprises 101 apartments in a block of 5-7 storeys, community centre and multi-storey car park (54 spaces, including 2 disabled). This received planning permission in September 2019. Bellerby Court includes a York Explore coffee shop and library, plus a community room.

It has proved difficult to identify what type of dwellings there are in Bellerby Court, but we know that they are one- to three-bed apartments.

"It's quite rare to have modern, new-build homes within the historic walls but Hungate fits in seamlessly with the surroundings. The buildings have been designed using elements of stone and a variety of brickwork (reds and browns). We have used traditional materials in a more contemporary way to create a distinctive identity while also blending with the local vernacular". (David Vanderson, Associate at Weedon Architects, quoted in the Lendlease/Evans sales brochure).

Block G, is planned to offer 196 apartments and 459 square metres of commercial floorspace (flexible retail/leisure at ground level), together with a landscaped courtyard, pedestrian, cycle and service infrastructure. Block G has full planning permission (February 2018). Work was due to start in 2019, with planned completion in 2020. Work has yet to start (April 2024). This was to be the first purpose-built rented block in the City.

According to the current planning application, the new flats will be made up of studios, one- and two-bedroom apartments, all of them having access to

balconies or ground floor terraces. The new building will also have a bike space for each flat, a communal lounge, 24-hour concierge, gym, courtyard, and rooftop terrace (a green roof) with Minster views. This phase of development will include the completion of the new public space to be known as St John Square.

The plans comprise a part six, part seven, part-8 storey building. The development is being designed by architects specialising in build-to-rent, and it will address the City's shortage of quality rental stock⁶.

Block H. The plans, which have yet to receive permission, involve around 230 new apartments and/or institutional/elderly C3 and C2 uses, plus flexible commercial use E and F2, landscaping and associated infrastructure. It may include a mixture of studio, 1 bed, 2 bed and 3 bed apartments. Commercial floorspace will be provided at ground floor level along The Stonebow and St John's Square. Work was due to start in 2022, but at the time of writing (April 2024) no progress has been made.

"Block H already benefits from outline planning permission for residential development, but in developing a detailed scheme, an opportunity has been identified to enable approximately 230 residential units to be delivered on the site, along with some minor changes to improve the previously approved design parameters." (Lendlease).

Summary of the Residential Provision

Block	Dwellings	Other uses
A , B and C Cordwainers Court and Adventurers Court	164	Underground car park; Hungate bridge
D To be built	186	
E Leetham House	154	
F Bellerby Court	101	Community room, Reading café, Multi-storey car park
G To be built	196	Commercial (retail/leisure)
H To be built	230	Commercial; possibly aged persons accommodation
Hiscox Offices	n/a	
Moxy Hotel	n/a	
Total	1031	
Approximate gross density	251dph ⁷	102dpa

⁶ According to Lend Lease head of residential, Richard Cook.

⁷ dph = dwellings per hectare; dpa = dwellings per acre.

Non-residential elements of the master plan

Hiscox Insurance built a new 'landmark' office building of 6,545 square metres, facing Peasholme Green. This included a new energy centre, with landscaping, improvements to the public realm and other infrastructure. It is part three-storey and part four-storey B1a in the Use Classes Order⁸.

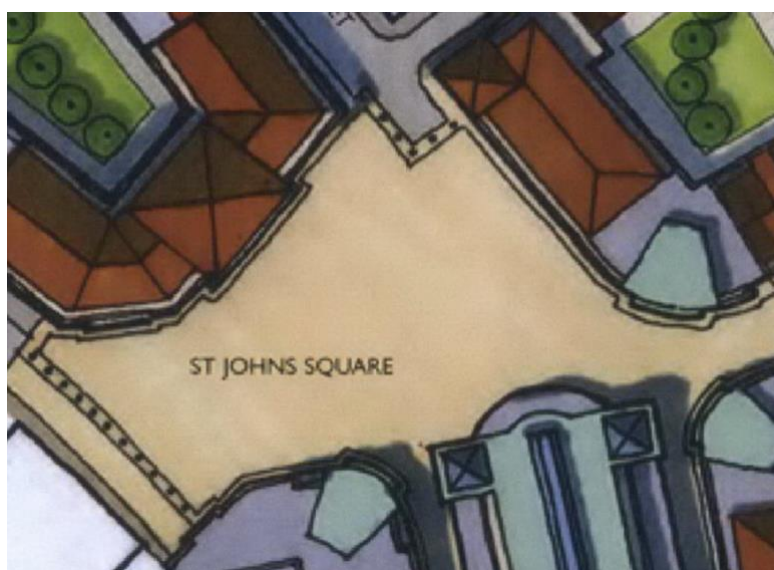
The planning application described the £19 million investment in a new landmark building for York, which would bring up to 500 new professional jobs to the local economy.

Because the building is located in a highly sustainable location it does not include any car parking spaces on site for members of staff or for visitors. The ground floor of the Hiscox building includes a cycle storage area with adjoining shower and changing facilities for staff use. The store has capacity for up to 100 bicycles.

The development proposals included two disabled parking bays, one on the eastern side of Dundas Street and the other on the southern side of Peasholme Green, both to be provided during a later phase of development.

The Moxy Hotel obtained planning permission in 2016 (16/02801/FULM). It is a 5-storey building backing onto Black Horse Lane. This was a development by Vastint Hospitality, and it provides 119 hotel guest rooms with ground floor reception, lounges, food and beverage and ancillary service rooms.

St Johns Square will be the largest area of public open space in the Hungate development once it is complete, though it will only really be a 'pocket park'.



⁸ Use Classes Order in force at that time.

Friar's Quay is the name given to a small area of public open space located on the Foss behind the proposed 'focal building' (i.e. a prominent building that would catch the eye). As constructed, it lies to the south-west end of Bellerby House and comprises a small triangle of grass and trees on the river bank.



A small new 'plaza' has been created in front of the Hiscox office building and in front of the Moxy Hotel (adjacent to Peasholme Green). This consists mainly of hard landscaping which off-sets the two buildings and provides access onto the pedestrian and cycle path leading into Hungate. It aligns with the locations of the historic Wool and Hay Markets.

Hungate Bridge, also known as Foss Navigation Bridge, carries Palmer Street across the Foss. It obtained full planning permission in 2008 (08/00300/FUL). It is a shared pedestrian and cycle path.

Section 106 Agreements

A Section 106 agreement was agreed and signed on 14th July 2006. Its provisions were aligned with the completion of different phases of the development.

The original phasing was agreed as follows:

Phase 1	Block A, B and C
Phase 2	Block G
Phase 3	Block E
Phase 4	Block D

Phase 5	Block F, Focal Building and car park
Phase 6	Block H

Development could not commence until a Sustainability and Energy Statement had been approved by the Council. The environmental standards set out in the Section 106 agreement were:

- 100% of properties should reach BREEAM (or equivalent) 'very good' standard; 15% reaching 'excellent' standard.
- Choosing materials that would produce a demonstrable reduction in carbon emissions.
- A plan for waste minimisation, recycling and disposal for the construction phase and for the buildings when occupied.
- A plan for pollution minimisation for the construction phase and for the buildings when occupied.
- 10% of properties to include micro-generation.

The original plans included a 'focal building', and the Section 106 agreement set out what this might include. The imaginative list included community space uses such as a creche, exhibition space, digital art technology space, multi-media centre, planetarium, museum, laboratory and display facility, multi-cultural centre. There could also be space for the Hungate Community Forum, a gallery and electronic library.

This was planned to be in place by the commencement of Phase 5, i.e. Block F, now Bellarby Court. Presumably, this has ended up as the York Explore café and community room.

The Section 106 agreement included an unspecified volume of affordable housing units, both for sale and for rent. Other documents suggest that CYC was hoping to achieve 40% affordability.

Community Development

There was widespread consultation in the early planning stages and the Hungate Community Forum was established to facilitate this. This led to the creation of the Hungate Community Trust, but it does not appear to have been sustained.

When Phase 1 was built a Residents' Association was established. This took part in various consultations, but there were not enough people prepared to be involved or contribute. Now there is an informal management group.

The management group tries to arrange community activities, but it tends to be permanent residents rather than tenants who are attracted to these.

Each of the three completed blocks (A/B/C, E and F) now has its own tenants'/residents' group:

Leetham House Community Group has a constitution and operating rules, which can be seen on its website <https://www.leethamhouse.uk>.

Bellerby Court Residents' Committee is not an official/legally-bound organisation, and it has just 13 members. It has instigated a monthly meeting/walk-round with Watsons (the managing agents). There is a 'core' of a community in Bellerby Court but, inevitably, not everyone wishes to get involved. The Residents' Committee has created a 'welcome pack' document and regularly holds coffee meet-ups for anyone to come along to. There is also a Residents WhatsApp Group, which most younger residents have joined. This has proved useful for quick notifications of hot-water/heating issues to be shared.

Since most of the leaseholders moved in at a similar time four years ago, they forged a core community – boosted by the cafe being situated in the same building. Difficulties in recruiting more people reflect the high level of rentals and rapid turnover of residents.

York Civic Trust (YCT) involvement

YCT submitted comments on the initial Development Brief and its subsequent revisions.

York Civic Trust set up a sub-committee in 2002, to comment on the plans for Hungate as they evolved.

A further Draft Development Brief emerged in 2004, and this was commented on by YCT. YCT was mainly concerned with the height, bulk and massing of the proposed blocks, which it felt were out of scale with the rest of the City Centre. This was deemed to be a particular concern given the site's close relationship with the historic core and the Central Conservation Area. As the plans evolved, they were considered not to have adequately addressed these issues.

The comments made in January 2007 relating to the plans for Phase 1, show the misgivings that YCT had about some key aspects of the proposals. "In previous comments on the development of this site we have expressed concern at the scale, bulk and massing of the proposed buildings and the significance of these aspects in relation to the inherent scale of York which gives it its unique character." The Trust expressed the hope that: "In that context the present scheme is an improvement on previous proposals. It is hoped that the scale of Phase 1 will inform other development proposals for this Hungate Area."

YCT commented in detail on the proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge over the River Foss.

YCT was heavily involved in the evolution of the Hiscox building, which it now considers to be a positive contributor to York's urban scene. This was originally earmarked as a site for offices for York City Council, and YCT was involved in those discussions too.

YCT has subsequently commented on each of the 'blocks' as they have been brought forward for development. In summary, the comments on these blocks have focused on their excessive height, overdevelopment leading to small over-shadowed inner courtyards, and general lack of design flair.

Awards

The Hungate development has received two awards:

- Royal Town Planning Institute Awards 2008, *Sustainable Communities Award Finalist*.
- York Design Awards – New offices for Hiscox Insurance were opened on the northern edge of the development in December 2015.

Residents' views on the main stakeholders

City of York Council

There has been very little input.

Lendlease

A major corporation which takes an arm's length view of the development, and only really gets involved when there are new proposals to be brought forward.

Evans Property

Residents will only have contact with Evans when encountering building snags or repairs.

Crosby Homes

Crosby Homes were part of the original development partnership, but no longer appear to have any role.

Watsons Managing Agents

Watsons manage all the external areas plus the nature reserve and the internal communal spaces. The inner courtyard landscape maintenance has been delegated to the tenants' management groups. Watsons are the main stakeholder with whom the residents have regular contact. General feedback is quite favourable. People are still not clear precisely what Watson's responsibilities include, for example, the nature reserve still appears to fall under the Hungate Regeneration Company and has not been properly completed. Watsons also look after the communal heating system and parking.

Homeground Management Ltd.

They collect the service charges, but make no other contribution.

Future and surrounding developments

Completion of the Hungate master plan will require the building of Blocks D, G and H, and finalising the public squares and other landscaping. There are several other developments which, affect how we see and experience the new Hungate:

- Not part of the development master plan, but an essential element of the new Hungate, is the block of student housing. Known as St John Central (12/00327/FULM) this comprises 258 study bedrooms and studios in an 8-storey building for students attending York St John University.
- Tucked in behind this is The Shambles multi-storey public car park. Visitors to Hungate can use this on a pay and display basis. The Development Brief specified that parking provision would be strictly controlled and that people visiting Hungate could use the existing car parking provision.
- Government office blocks were developed to the north and east of the Hungate site in the 1990s. It is a great shame that the opportunity to extend the River Foss walkway was missed, and the rear view of the buildings along Black Horse Lane is rather unpleasant. However, the York Civic Trust's

proposal to revamp and reopen the Foss Cable Bridge would improve the situation.

It is difficult not to assess Hungate in its wider context. After all, one of the aims was to integrate it into the surrounding fabric. Unfortunately, some of the surrounding fabric leaves much to be desired. Access onto Walmgate is possible on foot or by bicycle, but the route is not purpose-built and passes unsightly back land and buildings. The BT block to the immediate west of Hungate is an unattractive 1949-55 building arguably of no particular architectural merit. The building and its environs are poorly maintained.

Impressions from a Self-Guided Tour

YCT staff and members visited the Hungate development on a number of occasions during 2023, and this is a summary of our impressions.



Hoardings to the front aspect of the Hungate Scheme on Stonebow (Duncan Marks, 2024).



Looking across Hungate towards the Hiscox building and Stonebow (Phil Ogden, 2023).



Phase 1 housing seen beyond hoarding round Block D (John Stevens, 2023).

An unfinished job

Hungate occupies a prominent and important site at the heart of the City. It is a half-finished environment – making it difficult to imagine what it will be like when complete – if it ever is. Blocks D, G and H remain unbuilt, and the whole site is a

rather distressing mass of hoardings. These cut off key views. Another major downside is that the proposed new public amenity space at St. Johns Square has not been completed. This emphasises the 'hardness' of the current environment.



Life in a world of hoardings. The entrance to Bellerby Court with the reading café. In the distance are St John Central and BT building. (John Stevens, 2023).

High density development

Hungate has been developed at a very high density. On the basis of the figures provided in the planning documents, there will be 1,031 dwellings (33 town houses and 998 apartments) when Hungate is complete. This is much greater than the original master plan (around 600) and outline planning permission (720) suggested. This equates to a density of 251 dwellings per hectare (102 dwellings per acre)⁹.

This has its downsides for longer term permanent residents, though it may be fine for people who are staying a short time or simply passing through. If a person's priority is being in the City Centre then they may tolerate the density. This sense of

⁹ For comparison, the Chocolate Works is around 60 dph and Germany Beck perhaps 40.

over-development, density and bulk will surely become more intense if and when the remaining blocks are completed. It is interesting to note what the YCT had to say about density, bulk and massing in its early comments on the Hungate proposals... which have all proved perceptive.



Left: View north along Leatham Lane. Leatham House (right) and Bellerby Court (left). Just like Hong Kong! Right: The view east down Pond Garth (both John Stevens, 2023).

Anecdotally, the developers have pushed for increased heights and bulks. In this Hungate is not alone. This developer behaviour can also be seen at the Chocolate Works (See YCT Case Study 1).

As a result of the density and massing, buildings can seem a bit overbearing, for example along Palmer Street and Leatham Lane. These thoroughfares are narrow, very 'hard' and often in shadow. They look as though there would be little privacy for the residents, with potential for overlooking and noise transfer.

The apartments overlooking the River Foss and Kings Pool have a pleasant aspect, but many of others face onto unfinished sites with hoardings. In our opinion, it was a strange decision to build the multi-storey car park into Bellerby Court. It is not a pretty sight, and there must inevitably be light and air pollution.



Foss View looking east; Adventurer's Court to the left (John Stevens, 2023).

High density also increases the potential for noise and other disturbance e.g. from the pedestrian streets, people using mobile phones and sound systems in the courtyards and across balconies.

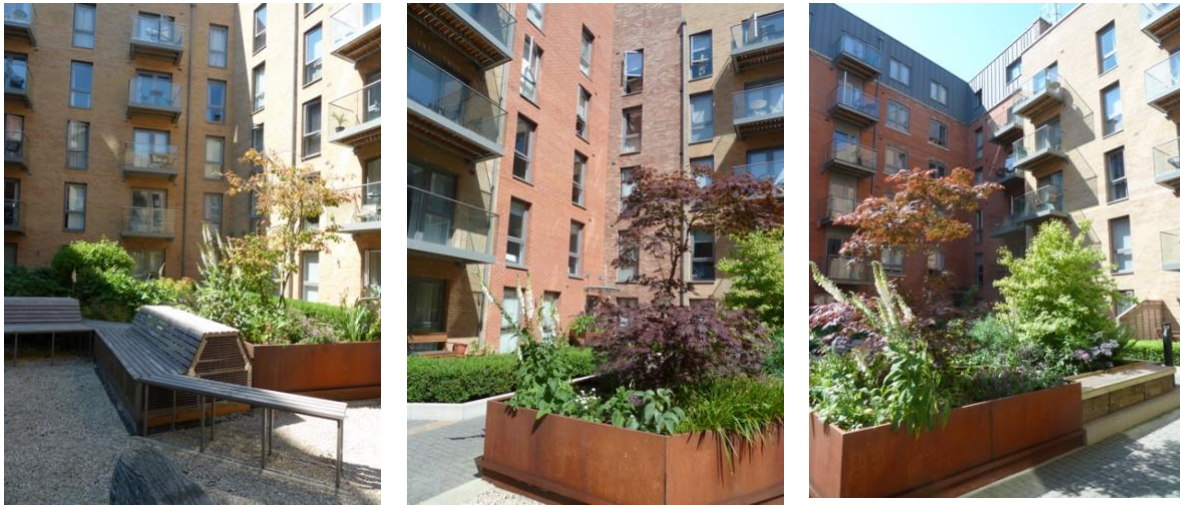
Design features and built environment

The town houses in Blocks A, B and C look quite generous, but are built to a high density with only limited outside space.

The courtyards in Blocks E and F are a bit mean in their dimensions and do not get much sun or light. However, they are well looked after by the residents.



The inner courtyard of Bellarby Court. (all John Stevens, 2023).



Three pictures of the inner courtyard of Leetham House (all John Stevens, 2023).



The inner courtyards of Phase I. (Lend Lease/Evans sales brochure).

In front of Bellerby Court lies the entrance to the York Explore Reading Café with bicycle parking. It is good to have the café and meeting room in Bellerby Court. These are clear community assets which seem to be reasonably well used. The corner of Leetham House has a vacant commercial unit. Attached to Bellerby Court is a multi-storey car park for residents only. This is rather unattractive, especially from inside the courtyard.



Ground plan for Bellerby Court, showing the community centre (top left) now the York Explore Reading Café; the car parking is located immediately down from this. (Lendlease sales brochure for Bellerby Court).

The Hiscox building is usually photographed from The Stonebow, featuring the glazed wall and entrance. The southern and western aspects, which are wholly brickwork, can be a bit overbearing. The Moxy Hotel is fairly non-descript architecture for the most part. It mirrors the use of glazing panels on the Hiscox building.



Left: Moxy Hotel (left) and Hiscox (right) from Stonebow. Right: Shared pedestrian and cycle path. Moxy Hotel on the left (both John Stevens, 2023).

Black Horse Lane is a bit grim. The bin store for the hotel is relatively tidy, but not a welcome residential neighbour. The shuttered entrance to underground car park

serving Phase 1 is to the south. The Government Office car park lies behind a high 'security' wall on the north.



Looking down Black Horse Lane (John Stevens, 2023).



Road to nowhere? The awkward alignment at the southern end of Bellerby Court, left, and sign of lost hope (Duncan Marks, 2024).

Phase 1 of Hungate exhibits plenty of variety in design and it forms an attractive whole. The buildings and landscaping are generally of a high quality. However, we noted quite a lot of discolouration of stone and brickwork and some balconies have weathered badly.



The view west along the pedestrian access to Phase 1 (both John Stevens, 2023).



Snagging and weathering issues along Foss View (all Duncan Marks, 2024).

Twelve town houses face onto King's Pool Walk. These are of three or four storeys with decent-sized rear gardens. They are divided into two groups of six by Pond Garth which is a public throughfare linking through to Palmer Street. The trees, shrubs and grass are very attractive. Beyond Pond Garth is the gated access to Adventurer's Court. From here you can look into the pleasant amenity space. These town houses benefit from overlooking the King's Pool, though in the summer it is almost obscured by trees and shrubs.¹⁰ There is a long access ramp to these properties.

¹⁰ Strictly speaking, this is the Foss Islands Nature Reserve. The King's Pool was name given to the whole marshy area formed by damming the River Foss. The Nature Reserve inlet is a reminder of the cooling tower that stood here until the 1980s, associated with the Electricity Generating Station on Foss Island Road and connected by the River Foss Cable Bridge.



The gated courtyards of Adventurer's Court, left (John Stevens, 2023), and King's Pool Wharf, right (Duncan Marks, 2024).

Pond Garth has six more town houses, three on each side. Two further gates give access to the attractive courtyards and there are small trees planted in containers.

Foss View footpath runs along between Adventurer's Court and the River Foss, and is a very attractive route. There are apartment blocks of six storeys on each corner, either side of six 4-storey town houses.



Left: Hungate Bridge, as seen from the Hungate side, looking south. Right Overbearing: Leatham Lane at the River Foss offers a narrow route between towering blocks of buildings, and often is in shade (both Duncan Marks, 2024).

Hungate Bridge provides a pedestrian and cycle route along Palmer Street and across to Foss Islands. It plays a strategic role in the active travel network, and the restrictions on Navigation Road support it. Looking north down Palmer Street there are two groups of four and five town houses divided by Pond Garth. These are of four storeys, and there are apartment blocks at each corner.

There is a fairly narrow walk along River Foss behind Leetham House and Bellerby Court. Leetham House apartments are 5 storeys plus a mansard overlooking the River. Bellerby Court is six storeys on the Foss side and seven to the north. The walk passes through newer landscaping which is not as lush as along Foss View and King's Pool Walk. The two blocks of apartments are separated by Leetham Lane. This is very narrow, often in shade and a bit overbearing.



Leetham House, left, on the River Foss, complimenting in materials, style and proportions the elegant nineteenth-century Leetham Mill building on the opposite side of the river (Duncan Marks, 2024).

Materials and design

The scale of the buildings in terms of height is most successful when seen from the other side of the River Foss. From Palmer Street bridge looking west, Blocks E and F are appropriate given they face the former Leetham Mill building. Their 6-storey end gables offer an appropriate wharf-like feel. Looking the other direction from the bridge, Blocks B and C mostly drop down to a four-storey height giving a stronger townhouse feel. One adverse impact of these heights, especially within Hungate, is the creation of a 'wind' tunnel effect, noted along Pond Garth, Palmer Street and Leetham Lane.

The use of materials in the buildings is of a good standard. Stone cladding at lower levels brings a strong foundation setting, and has a touch of Yorkness to it, emulating historic buildings in the city (Merchant Adventurer's Hall, Hospitium, Fielden Building). The stone sits particularly well with a mottled brick palette to the upper storeys and both are offset with a grey, cream or white render colour scheme that helps unite the site. Brick lintel details offer interest and relief, as well as a heritage reference to former mills, warehouses, and wharves.

At ground floor level, some of the blocks offer an awkward arrangement of public and private space. Most of the blocks' entrances are raised up and surrounded by ground-floor stone articulation, as a sort of defensible space – albeit some of the doorways are gloomy and generally uninviting. But some ground-floor windows look directly out into the public realm (Block E – north facing) – and/or have small balcony areas that are arguably more public than private (Block E – south facing; Block C – east facing).



Uninviting entrances? Raised entrances from 'defensible' positions on Leetham Lane, left, and Foss View, right (both Duncan Marks, 2024).

Some of the blocks – Hiscox; Blocks C and E – offer a poor delineation at parapet level. The uniformity of their vertical fenestration, which works well on the riverside of these blocks, achieving a wharf or mill aesthetic, is limiting on the northern, inner-Hungate facing side. Here, the blocks seemingly taper out with barely a parapet in sight and no visible roofscape.



Looking across the site of Block D toward the Hiscox building, offering poor delineation at parapet level (left) (John Stevens, 2023).

Because of this, there is a lack of identity for many of the individual blocks despite their buildout quality. Similarly, while the historic names of the streets of Hungate – Dundas St, Black Horse Lane, etc. – are continued in the masterplan, there is not yet a feel that these are ‘streets’ with a sense of design, identity or purpose in mind.

Views and massing

There are good framed-views looking out from within Hungate. The best is the destructor chimney, as seen between Blocks A and C along Pond Garth. The Minster at the far end of the lane running alongside the Hiscox building, and the former Leetham Mill as seen between Blocks E and F down Leetham Lane, are also excellent. Sadly, the framed views looking into Hungate are not good – for example, the reverse views of the three detailed above are all poor.



Destructor chimney on Foss Islands, as seen between Blocks A and C along Pond Garth (Duncan Marks 2024).

The masterplan arrangement of the blocks also leads to a perimeter massing that is somewhat defensive in nature and claustrophobic. For example, on Dundas St, looking south, there is no apparent break in the built form despite the 'range' ahead being four distinct separate blocks. This leaves little in terms of intuitive readability of the site's permeability. And yet, closer inspection would reveal there to be at least two good ways to move through the site and get beyond the built form.

From Stonebow, looking east and south, there's a near perimeter wall of housing that forms its own skyline. This holds little in the way of Yorkness and a stronger feel of a larger more modern city. While the individual blocks have a good degree of articulation and Blocks A and C in particular have a craggy tooth townhouse profile, there is nowhere for the 'eye to rest' – with the verticality of some aspects competing with neighbouring horizontality. From this, there is a lack of character to be found within the inner Hungate scheme, both individually per block and from the overall collection of massing; a missed opportunity.



Perimeter massing of Leetham House (left), Bellerby Court (central) and St John Central (right) visually combining as defensive in nature and claustrophobic (Duncan Marks, 2024).

From the south and east of the site, as seen from the other side of the River Foss, there are some charming vistas that largely also benefit from mature trees, including those of the Foss Islands Nature Reserve. But there is no provision of formal, framed or chance views into Hungate. Once more it is a perimeter structures of the blocks that combine to allow visual permeability across the site.

Occasionally there are chance views of courtyards within the blocks, which offer glimpses of a green, shared oasis and a communal aspect with generous seating areas. Block E is one of these, and there the more open spaces within Blocks A and C, albeit tucked away along King's Pool Walk. More might have been made of these, and in particular better visibility from the Hungate path along the River Foss, in ways that, say, riverside walks through London – along the Thames at South Bank, Hammersmith, or Fulham – offer incidental green oases amongst dominant urban housing schemes, where the public and private blur and invite investigation.

Longer distance views – including from Piccadilly – are not encouraging or welcoming.



Distance view of Hungate as seen from opposite Stonebow House at the Pavement-end of Stonebow (Duncan Marks, 2024).

Open space and landscaping

The central Hungate area is almost entirely hard surfaced. The blockwork is of a good standard. It gives Hungate a strong urban form, albeit somewhat austere. There is only a modest use of public form to break up the blankness of the landscape – noticeably a couple of Corton steel planters and a few slender lampposts. Sadly, it only presents the prominence of a brushed steel sewer vent column as if intended as an art feature. There are currently few¹¹ benches – an unsubtle message not to idle.

The Foss River frontage has been nicely landscaped and is well maintained, especially along Foss View. The newer part of the walkway west of Hungate bridge will take time to mature and reach the same standard. King's Pool Walk is very attractive, with lots of mature trees and shrubs. Steps lead up to the gated access and door to Cordwainer's Court. The amenity space in the courtyard looks very

¹¹ Current guidance suggests that there should be such provision every 50 metres.

attractive. The removal of the viewing platform is to be regretted, but residents were subjected to antisocial behaviour while it was there. Should it be reinstated?



Unimpressive landscaping outside Leetham House (John Stevens, 2023).

The landscaping along the river introduces a green space that has helped some of the blocks to 'bed-in' to their surroundings. The choice of some of the planter trees here is insipid, however, and the use of up-lighting at their trunks gives a sense of artificiality rather than an organic, natural presence.

The path along the riverfront is a welcome provision, giving a canal-side feel. There are some small issues with the path – such as the grass wearing away with plastic grass paving grid showing through. The biggest failing of the path is that it does not connect well as part of the masterplan. The western end is a terminus, with an ugly interface with a neighbouring building and, at a lower level, river path (not accessible). To the east and north, the path passes the Foss Islands Nature Reserve, which introduces variety and contrast to the built form. But the path then loops back via a dogleg route with poor sightlines and past an unsightly basement car park. Opening the Foss Island Cable Bridge would bring a purposeful end point to the path as well as increasing Hungate's connectivity.

External landscaping looks immature and scrappy with the wrong plants in the wrong places. The interior of the site lacks trees, but perhaps this will be made good where St John's Square is complete.

New public spaces have yet to materialise. Are they going to be big enough and well maintained/managed? Both St John's Square and Friar's Quay appear to be much smaller than on the original master plan. Without careful management, St John's Square could raise problems of noise, rough sleeping and littering. This was the experience of Phase 1, where unwanted visitors were attracted to the (now removed) observation deck and seating alongside the nature reserve.

Sustainable transport

Transport seems to be fairly well handled. The location in the heart of York is a major attraction for residents, giving easy access to a wide range of facilities and services – all within walking distance. Residents appreciate being able to access a wide range of city centre services and facilities on foot. Access to good local schools is more problematic, but does not affect many residents as there are few families on the development. People refer to the 'brilliant' access to public transport, including both buses and trains. Most younger tenants either walk to work, cycle, or catch buses (5 minutes' walk away).

There is adequate cycle storage provision, but not much sign of resident cyclists when we were there. The cycle route over the Foss does look well used, though the mixing of pedestrians and cyclists can be challenging. Does the cycling provision fit into the city-wide cycle network? A main cross-city route follows the line of Aldwark in one direction, and the Hungate bridge in the other. All pedestrian and cycle routes to the north involve crossing or following The Stonebow/Peasholme Green, which can be a challenge.

The shared space route between the Moxy Hotel and Hiscox is well used, especially by pedestrians heading for the bridge, and on towards Foss Islands. Like much of Hungate, the prospect here is very 'urban' – exclusively hard landscaping.

Overall Successes and Shortcomings – Some Lessons

Is Hungate in any way a balanced community? Probably not. There is a preponderance of small apartments, very few families and, as yet, no accommodation for the elderly. A lot of Hungate does not look permanently lived

in – there are numerous closed shutters and blinds; balcony furniture stowed away, and there are often few lights on.

The development has/will have a mix of uses. There are the Hiscox offices and the Moxy Hotel, together with planned commercial space in Blocks E, G and H. Hungate is located in the city centre where many different jobs are available or accessible by active transport.

Lengthy construction period and achievement of the vision

Hungate involves the complex and long-term redevelopment of a challenging site. The impact of the financial crisis, the Covid pandemic, World events and resultant economic uncertainties, have meant that completion of Hungate is well behind schedule. This means that, however good we think the completed buildings and environment are, residents are having to live with the uncertainties and disruptions of an incomplete scheme.

There is major concern that the development has not been completed. People feel that they were sold a vision which has not been fulfilled. This uncertainty undermines the attempts at community development. People are concerned that they are expected to live opposite unkempt empty spaces or to be affected by endless years of construction noise and mess. Original residents may have been living with construction going on around them for over 10 years.

The Hungate development was originally supposed to be completed two years ago. The latest date for completion published by the developers was 2024, but this now seems unlikely to be achieved. Apparently, future phases may be in doubt, because it would appear anecdotally that Lendlease wants to sell up. It is interesting to reflect that the outstanding phases of Hungate could have provided a year's housing supply for the city. It underlines the case that shortages of housing are not always caused by the planning system, but by the business imperatives of the developers.

Archaeology

Hungate provided a highly successful model of archaeological exploration and community involvement. The 5 year archaeological dig funded by the developers was conducted by York Archaeological Trust. This was the largest urban excavation in the city for a quarter of a century, covering 2,500 square metres and lasting up to 2012. During that time over 20,000 people visited the site. Finds included a Roman cemetery, Viking age cellars and many interesting artifacts. However, there is nothing in the public realm to reflect what was found or the work

that went on which could enrich the experience of living or visiting. There has not been much published about the project, so there is little opportunity for residents of anyone else to find out about the excavations.

Meeting Housing Needs

Hungate to date has no affordable housing, though there could still be some in future phases. The original plan was for 40% of total dwellings to be affordable, either for sale or rent. This is a major disappointment.

The developers first agreed to provide affordable homes, and this was included in the Section 106 Agreement. They then claimed that, in the light of changing economic circumstances, the scheme would not be viable if these requirements were retained.

For example, when planning permission was extended in 2012, the developers' 'obligations' were relaxed. According to York Press (21st September 2012) the developers threatened to abandon development unless affordable housing and Section 106 obligations were relaxed. In the same article it was reported that work on Hungate would resume in 2015 and be completed by 2024.

Hungate, as built, provides a very high proportion of – mainly small – apartments. There is a preponderance of one- and two-bedroomed apartments. Phase 1 does include 33 town houses but, even here, the developers were keen to replace them with apartments. For example, there was an application to convert six of the townhouses to duplex flats.

Community

There is a split between leaseholders, i.e. those who have bought their dwellings and live in them, and tenants – who are renting from private landlords. Anecdotally there are many buy-to-lets, with many owners living overseas. There are no precise figures, but the split is estimated at 30% leaseholders and 70% renters.

The former have an older age profile, and many are people who have down-sized and moved to Hungate to take advantage of York's social and cultural attractions. They all moved in at the same time and have formed an active community. The renters, anecdotally, are either youngish professionals who spend only part of the time at Hungate, or well-off overseas students. Though marketed as a 'community', there are very few families. Anecdotally, it would seem that residents relate to their individual blocks first and then to Hungate more generally.

For the relatively small proportion of permanent residents, then, there is a sense of community, with friendly and supportive neighbours. Renters are not generally interested in management and other activities.

Absentee landlords are a barrier to involvement and communication. Houses in Multiple Occupation can be a problem, if they are not registered and controlled. Also, despite it being banned, there are a number of Airbnbs. Some people say that the managing agents are unable or unwilling to take action; others say that it is under control.

It is worth reflecting on how the timely provision of shops and services can help stimulate the building of 'community'. The York Explore Café is the sole example of this on the Hungate development.

Leasehold – Responsibilities

There is a complex pattern of ownership and responsibilities. Hungate (York) Regeneration Ltd. is a partnership of Evans Property Group and Lendlease. The development partners construct the blocks and then pass on the leasehold to other, sometimes off-shore, companies.

Lendlease are understood to have retained the head lease on Blocks 1-3. There are rumours that Lendlease might wish to sell up. Leaseholders (Called 'tenants') have been invited to buy out their leases, but not everybody can afford this or wants to do it. There are costs involved in hiring legal services in order to make a transaction.

Each block has a different leaseholder, with a different approach to freehold acquisition:

- Lendlease retain the head lease on Phase 1, Blocks A, B and C.
- Lendlease have sold the head lease of Leetham House to Roando, and tenants pay them ground rent on a 199-year lease. This is fixed for the initial 25 years. Watsons are responsible for maintenance. Homeground Management Ltd. collect the service charges.
- The head lease for Leetham House is now held by Adriatic Land 7, while that for Bellerby Court is retained by Lend Lease. Lend Lease would allegedly like to sell the latter to Long Harbour. There are too few owners to buy out the leases.

Residents are confused and somewhat concerned about the complexity of the responsibilities and obligations that come with being a leasehold tenant. The mish-mash of managing agents and lease holder arrangements undermines people's confidence in the future, including their perceived ability to sell their properties. Renters, in particular, often do not know the rules and obligations.

Sales may be further complicated by the health and safety rules following the Grenfell Tower fire. There is no cladding, but balconies may require certification.

Management, maintenance and security

How are the completed parts of the scheme managed and maintained? The 'Estate' comprises all the external/surrounding areas and the Nature Reserve; each of the three blocks have internal 'garden areas'. Watsons manage the external area directly. The internal areas are more complicated, with the tenants' groups having some say. For Leetham House there is a 'gardening group' of about 6 which looks after the garden and receives funds from Watsons; Bellerby Court has something similar.

There are concerns about the responsibilities for future maintenance and management of the open spaces, including King's Pool. Lendlease removed some diseased poplars from here, but failed to carry out stump-grinding. People think that his had more to do with limiting liability than with managing the ecology. King's Pool is a York amenity, and its management and maintenance need to be put on a sound footing. Some residents are Friends of the River Foss and carry out litter picking and vegetation maintenance.

Residents are concerned about the management of the proposed public square, bearing in mind the problems raised by the observation deck which used to front King's Pool. There were some problems of noisy behaviour and vandalism, as well as rough sleepers. Some poor behaviour already impacts on the residents facing through routes.

Communication between different stakeholders is poor, especially where it really matters on day-to-day issues. An effective relationship with the managing agent is vital. The upkeep, managing agent, communication and building management system could all have been much better. Residents are continually working alongside Watsons and their contractors to improve all these aspects.

Residents report that the landscaping and its maintenance could be better. Part of the problem stems from the poor design and implementation of the original

landscaping. Better landscaping requires competent gardeners and sensible planting schemes, for example, to cope with drought.



Feeble landscaping! (John Stevens, 2023).

Design and build quality

The apartment blocks are widely considered to be well-built, with excellent insulation giving low heating costs. Noise transfer between apartments does not appear to be a major issue, though there is some vertical transfer. Anecdotal evidence suggests that people like the town houses. Residents of the apartments like their balconies, though some inevitably miss having a proper garden.

The construction 'finish' on Bellerby Court is reported as being of a better quality than Phases 1 and 2. Building insulation, sound reduction and many other aspects have improved over time.

Phase 1 is widely seen as more interesting in terms of design, which arguably declines as we go down the phases. The designs proposed for the unbuilt blocks are viewed by some residents as 'Lego blocks' with little design interest.

People comment adversely on the overdevelopment that turned the route between Phases 1 and 2 (Palmer Street) into a narrow alley. There is little privacy here due to overlooking, and it can be noisy as it is the main route onto the pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Foss.



Inside the multi-storey car park at Bellerby Court. (John Stevens, 2023).

Transport

There are some important issues with parking provision. In total there are now thought to be 204 parking spaces currently available to residents.

There are a limited number of spaces for sale – anecdotally at around £30,000 each. Lendlease are not releasing any of the unallocated spaces, possibly to justify no/limited provision in later phases.

Around a third of the parking spaces have been sold to residents so far with Lendlease responsible for the remaining 66% voids. These spaces would, of course, be designated to any resident wishing to purchase their own space in future. There are ongoing light-pollution issues with the car-park lighting, too.

The layout of Hungate makes it difficult for tradesmen and delivery vehicles. Servicing has been poorly thought through, and may involve getting approval to remove bollards.

Also, there is no visitor parking, as visitors were expected to use local pay & display car parks. This is inconvenient for carers and tradespeople.

There are no conveniently located disabled spaces. The only two disabled spaces have been allocated to tenants.

There is some concern and confusion about the possible impact of highways adoption by CYC. Some of the street lights already appear to be maintained by CYC, but nobody is sure. Presumably adoption will only be possible once the whole Hungate development is complete?



Looking north up Dundas Street towards the Hiscox Building. This is where the car club and disabled parking spaces are provided, but it also enables illicit parking and deliveries. (John Stevens, 2023).

Key documents and sources

Development Brief, CYC, April 2005.

jtp website <https://www.jtp.co.uk/projects/hungate>

York Archaeology carried out major investigations of the site in 2018. The reports are here:

<https://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk/case-studies-blog/2019/6/3/hungate>

<https://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk/case-studies-blog/2019/6/3/hungate-block-g-excavations>

York Archaeology, P0647 Hungate Development (Phase 1)

<https://www.collections.yorkarchaeologicaltrust.co.uk/s/collections/item/128086>

York Archaeology, P0647 Hungate Development (Phase 3)

<https://www.collections.yorkarchaeologicaltrust.co.uk/s/collections/item/128128>

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Draft Development Brief January 2005.

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Hungate Master Plan, John Thompson & Partners, November 2002.

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Annex – Major Planning Applications

Major planning permissions were obtained, as follows:

STAGE	PLAN REF.	APPROVED*	NOTES
Outline whole site	02/03741/OUT dated July 2006	n/a	720 units; 12,062sm B1; 6,392sm retail/food/drink nature reserve, public spaces and infrastructure
Outline covering Blocks D, F, G and H	15/01709/OUTM	August 2015	
Revised Outline covering Blocks D, F, G and H	17/02019/OUTM	December 2017	Hybrid Planning Permission Increased height of Block G
Phase 1	06/01763/REMM 06/02384/REMM	Aug and Nov 2006	163 dwellings including landscaping, open space and car parking
Phase 2	07/01901/REMM	November 2007	154 dwellings, including car parking and 7 commercial units (1,151sm)
Phases 3 and 4	Block G 17/02019/OUTM and 17/03032/REMM 19/02618/CLD Block H 15/01709/OUTM	Dec2019 or later Dec2017 Aug 2015	196 residential units plus flexible retail/leisure uses, landscaped courtyard and infrastructure
Phase 5	Block D 18/02946/FULM	Dec 2018	Housing C3 and/or C2 plus flexible commercial A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 B1 or D2 and infrastructure.
Phase 6	Block H 21/00280/FULM	Feb 2021 awaited	Housing C3 or C2 plus flexible commercial use E and F2
Hiscox Offices	13/03302/FULM	2013	
Moxy Hotel	16/02801/FULM	2016	

More information about the development of Hungate can be found here:

<https://planningaccess.york.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=0203741OUT>

The Section 106 Agreement can be found here:

https://planningaccess.york.gov.uk/online-applications/files/02129D56C79DB589437BE32F4C569844/pdf/02_03741_OUT-S106_AGREEMENT_DATED_14TH_JULY_2006-2419341.pdf